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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MANAGING PUPIL NURSES IN ORDER TO INCREASE THEIR CAPABILITIES

By HELEN M. COLLINS

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Psychology, according to Webster, is "the science of the human soul; psycho, from the Greek, the soul, the mind, the understanding." Human psychology deals with the thoughts and feelings of human beings and seeks to explain the facts of intellect, character and personal life.

The art of teaching has been improved by basing it upon the science of psychology. As the science progresses it will more and more provide all the arts that aim to influence men and will more and more be recognized as a part of the equipment of teacher, business man, clergyman and writer. Even now there are signs of a rapidly growing recognition of its importance by practical men and women.

When in mental difficulty, do not worry or aimlessly try this or that, but seek the reason, is the plain teaching of psychology. There is a reason for everything, one may not always find the cause and finding it may not be able to remedy it, but there will be many cases where a diligent search for the reason will disclose it and show the means of preventing the trouble.

We think and feel so as to do, and what we do, that and that alone we really are, therefore it is necessary to encourage right thinking in the individual with whom we have to deal, in order to make of that individual a more efficient person.

Each individual is different from others, each has his or her own idea of thinking which is the same as acting; the thought precedes the act. By finding out each individual's constitution and directing her energies in the right channel, we may make her more useful and incite her to service which she can do better than anyone else. The influence of everyone lasts a lifetime, the little things of life prepare for the great and no effort for right is ever a waste. Our only responsibility toward the unknown is to do our best by the known.

A nurse may have been making a failure of her work; she is discouraged and disheartened, her mental attitude is all wrong toward her work, and herself. From a psychological standpoint much can be done to change this attitude, the first aim being to inspire the confidence of the individual. In this way alone can one really gain an

insight into her mental or inner life. Encourage her to talk of herself, her life, her work, her ideas, etc. Here then you are searching for the reason, and on finding it, much help may be given by directing her thoughts aright. You are bound to find good qualities as well as the bad, and good qualities found may be made into better qualities. Try to instil in the mind the thought that at no time must we consider an action accomplished as perfect. Let the thought of improvement be stamped indelibly in the mind, so that each time an act is accomplished, so each time will improvement accompany it. The attention must be directed on an idea until it at last grows so as to maintain itself before the mind with ease.

Habit plays a large part in a nurses' life; we have good and many times bad habits. In correcting bad habits, encourage nurses to make new resolutions, and to act on them. Every resolution acted upon affects one's character for the better. When a resolve is allowed to go without bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost. One who constantly shrinks from making an effort to improve and to act upon resolutions made, will some day flounder in a sea of chaos, but she who keeps the faculty of effort alive by repeated efforts each day will become an expert.

In our busy "work-a-day" world we may not think the effort worth while. Many times it may be easier to pass over faults and mistakes than to stop and search out the reason. We may not think it will help many individuals into a better path and we may not, as I have said before, be able to remedy it, but at least a little help may be given, a thought may be instilled, which will in time bear practical fruit.

No matter how poorly a pupil may be doing, one may, by getting an insight into her mental and inner life, and by re-directing her energy, do much toward increasing her capability.

A STATE CANCER SOCIETY

One of the recent additions to health organizations is the State Society for the Control of Cancer which was started at a meeting held in Columbus on November 22. Dr. Ransohoff, Cincinnati, presided. It is planned to conduct a state-wide educational campaign similar to the anti-tuberculosis campaign.